Grain Transportation Report

A weekly publication of the
Transportation and Marketing Programs/Transportation Services Branch
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Contents

The next release is Mar. 24, '05

House Votes to Make Agricultural Hours of Service Exemption Permanent. On March 10, the House approved highway bill H.R.3, making the agricultural hours of service exemption permanent and defining its scope. The exemption provides that regulations "regarding maximum driving and on-duty time for drivers used by motor carriers shall not apply during planting and harvest periods, as determined by each State to drivers transporting agricultural commodities or farm supplies for agricultural purposes in a State if such transportation is limited to an area within a 100-air mile radius from the source of the commodities or the distribution point for the farm supplies." "Agricultural commodity" is "any agricultural commodity, food, feed, fiber, or livestock (including livestock as defined in section 602 of the Emergency Livestock Feed Assistance Act of 1988 (7 U.S.C. 1471) and insects," and "farm supplies" are "products directly related to the growing or harvesting of agricultural commodities during the planting and harvesting seasons within each State, as determined by the State, and livestock feed at any time of the year."

The Agricultural Retailers Association, Agricultural and Food Transporters Conference, National Corn Growers Association, National Grain and Feed Association, The Fertilizer Institute, and others requested the exemption be made permanent, and that definitions be included. USDA has supported the exemption since it was first proposed over 10 years ago and made part of the National Highway System Designation Act of 1995. *Brian.McGregor@USDA.gov*

Trans-Pacific Maritime Conference Addresses Transportation Congestion Issues. The 5th Annual Trans-Pacific Maritime Conference held in Long Beach, CA, February 28-March 1, 2005, featured in-depth discussions on recent port congestion and delays. U.S. West Coast ports struggled to accommodate double digit growth in import cargo from Asia that occurred in the second half of 2004. Participants at this year's conference sought to understand the causes of such congestion and what the ports, shipping lines, railroads, and government were doing to prevent this from happening again. Most analysts predict another 15-percent growth in imports from Asia in 2005.

To prepare for these growing Asian imports, ocean carriers are increasing capacity by purchasing larger vessels that can hold as many as 9,000 20-foot containers. These new "post-Panamax" vessels are too large to transit the Panama Canal, forcing carriers to unload these ships at U.S. West Coast ports, or transit the Suez Canal to reach U.S. East Coast ports. Shipping lines have invested in these new vessels to achieve greater economies of scale; however, these ships must be full in order to generate the desired revenue.

Railroads report that, due to capacity constraints, service problems are likely to continue in 2005. To help resolve these problems, Union Pacific (UP) has plans for double track expansion out of Southern California. Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) has significantly reduced congestion at its facilities by charging a $150-per-day storage fee for containers left in the facility over the allowable time frame. According to BNSF, this has drastically reduced the congestion in its rail yards providing more fluid facilities. Further, rail carriers are asking customers to simplify their supply chain and scale back their expectations of the carriers. *April.Taylor@USDA.gov*

Grain Transportation Indicators

Table 1--Grain transport cost indicators*

Week ending	Truck	Rail	Barge	Ocean	
				Gulf	Pacific
03/16/05	147	75	191	286	285
Compared with last week	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑

*Indicator: Base year 2000 = 100; Weekly updates include truck = diesel ($/gallon); rail = nearby secondary rail market ($/car); barge = spot Illinois River basis (index = percent of tariff rate); and ocean = routes to Japan ($/metric ton)

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 2--Market update: U.S. origins to export position price spreads ($/bushel)

Commodity	Origin--destination	3/11/2005	3/4/2005
Corn	IL--Gulf	-0.62	-0.58
Corn	NE--Gulf	-0.68	-0.64
Soybean	IA--Gulf	-0.77	-0.83
HRW	KS--Gulf	-0.90	-0.85
HRS	ND--Portland	-1.34	-1.39

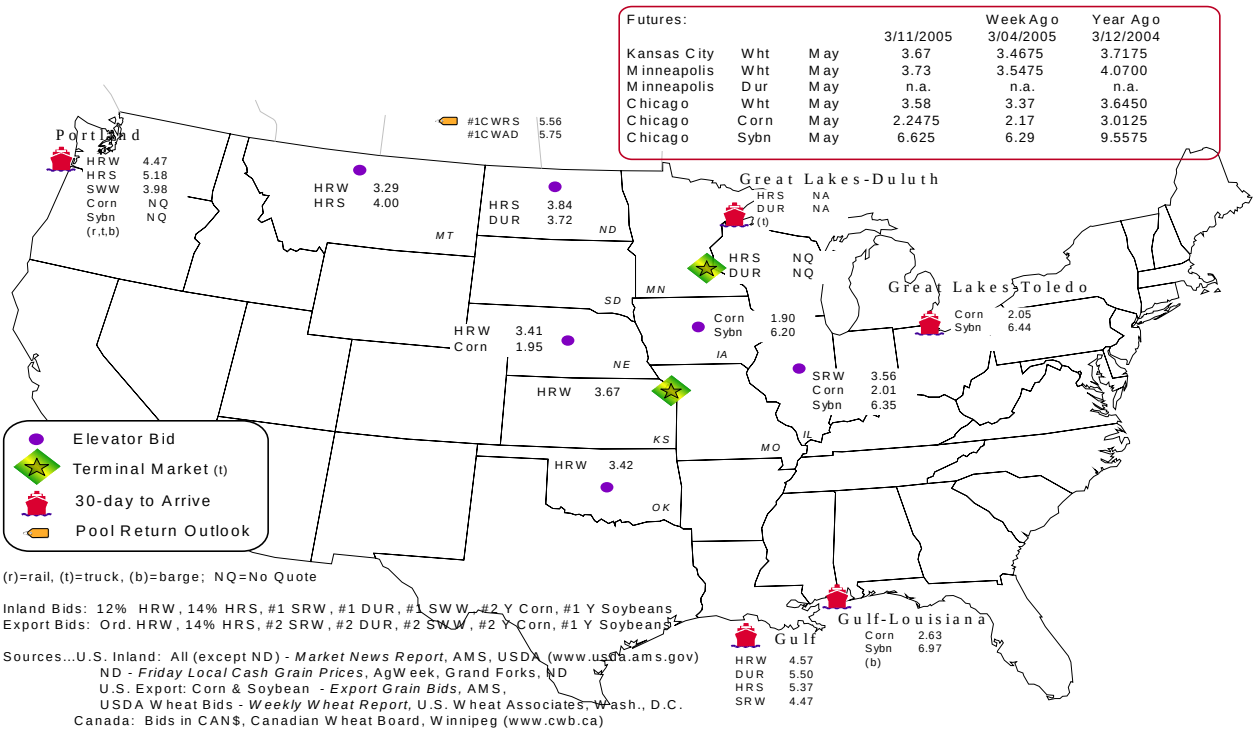
Note: nq = no quote

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

The **grain bid summary** illustrates the market relationships for commodities. Positive and negative adjustments in differential between terminal and futures markets, and the relationship to inland market points, are indicators of changes in fundamental market supply and demand. The map may be used to monitor market and time differentials.

Figure 1

Grain bid summary



Rail Transportation

Table 3--Rail deliveries to port (carloads)*

Week ending	Mississippi Gulf	Texas Gulf	Cross-Border Mexico	Pacific Northwest	Atlantic & East Gulf	Total
03/09/2005[p]	447	2,173	2,177	5,397	461	10,655
3/02/2005[r]	509	2,245	1,705	4,818	489	9,766
2005 YTD	4,167	18,017	15,721	46,998	5,059	89,962
2004 YTD	2,048	25,970	8,391	42,734	2,799	81,942
2005 as % of 2004	203	69	187	110	181	110
Total 2004	10,475	92,073	67,992	209,625	10,986	391,151
Total 2003**	14,843	88,194	48,805	157,125	20,509	329,476

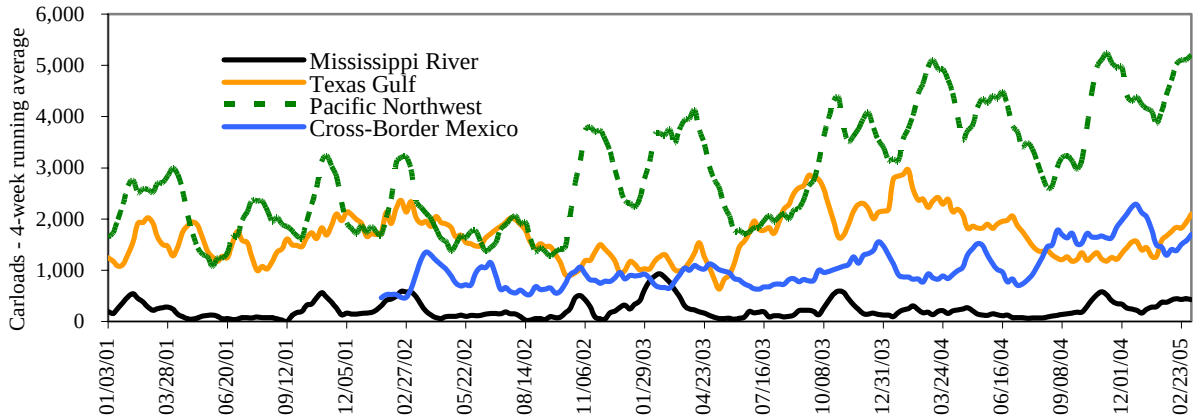
(*) Incomplete Data; as of 9/22/04, Cross-Border movements included; (**) Excludes 53rd week;YTD = year-to-date; p = preliminary data; r = revised data

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Railroads originate approximately 40 percent of U.S. grain shipments. Trends in these loadings are indicative of market conditions and expectations.

Figure 2

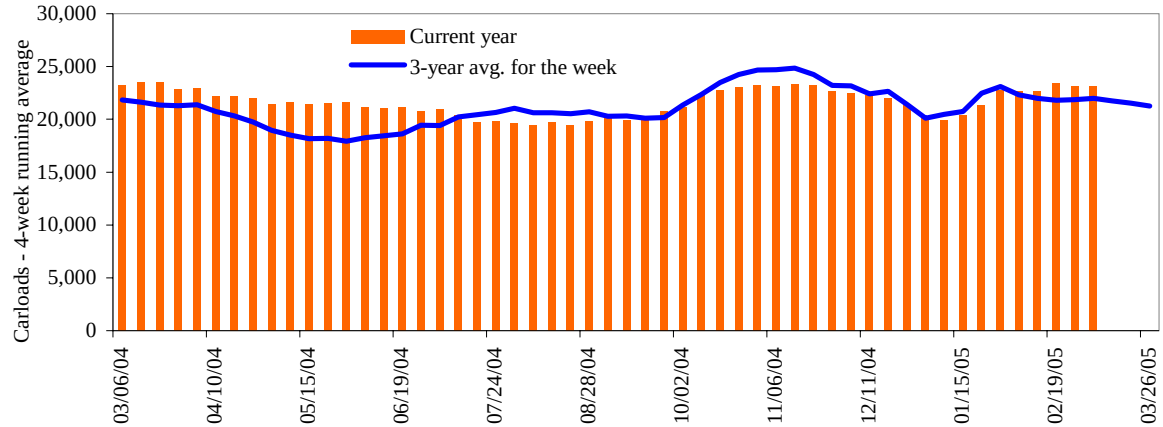
Rail deliveries to port



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 3

Total weekly U.S. grain car loadings for Class I railroads



Source: Association of American Railroads

Table 4--Class I rail carrier grain car bulletin (grain carloads originated)

	East		West			U.S. total	Canada	
Week ending	CSXT	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP		CN	CP
03/05/05	3,190	3,192	10,270	681	5,388	22,721	4,668	3,507
This week last year	2,697	3,179	9,741	536	6,840	22,993	4,488	3,444
2005 YTD	28,198	31,081	87,912	6,325	52,578	206,094	41,574	36,729
2004 YTD	26,797	31,725	85,413	5,500	60,161	209,596	40,987	30,986
2005 as % of 2004	105	98	103	115	87	98	101	119
Total 2004	142,206	169,650	458,587	27,618	327,510	1,125,571	237,664	210,060

Source: Association of American Railroads (www.aar.org); YTD = year-to-date

Table 5--Rail car auction offerings, week ending 3/12/05 ($/car)*

Delivery for:	Apr. 05	May-05	Jun. 05
BNSF[1]			
COT/N. grain	no offer	$2	$1
COT/S. grain	no offer	$4	$7
UP[2]			
GCAS/Region 1	no offer	no offer	no offer
GCAS/Region 2	no offer	$1	no offer

*Average premium/discount to tariff, last auction

[1]BNSF - COT = Certificate of Transportation

N includes: ID, MN, MT, ND, OR, SD, WA, WI, WY, and Manitoba, Canada.

S includes: CO, IA, IL, KS, MO, NE, OK, TX, NM, AZ, CA, UT, and NV.

[2]UP - GCAS = Grain Car Allocation System

Region 1 includes: AR, IL, LA, MO, NM, OK, TX, WI, and Duluth, MN.

Region 2 includes: CO, IA, KS, MN, NE, WY, and Kansas City and St. Joseph, MO.

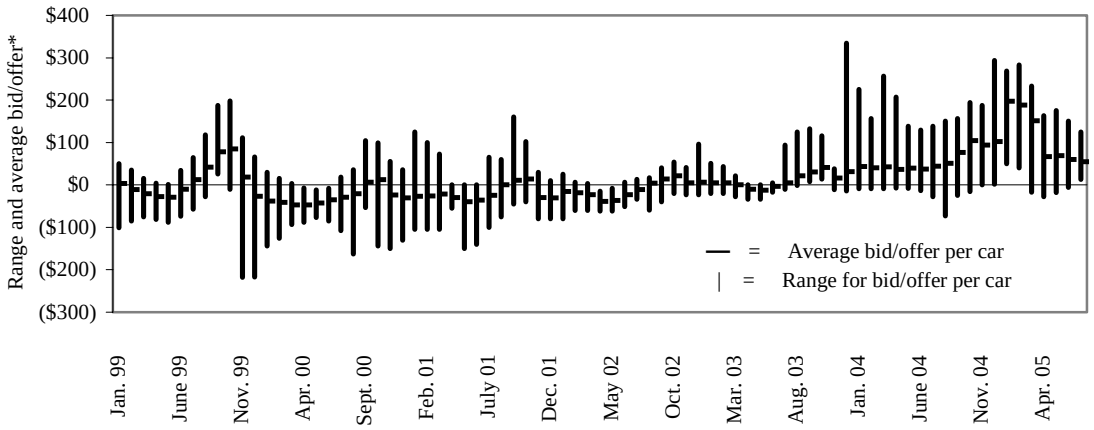
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Rail service may be ordered directly from the railroad via **auction** for guaranteed service or tariff for nonguaranteed service or through the secondary market.

The **secondary rail market** information reflects trade values for service that was originally purchased from the railroad carrier as some form of guaranteed freight. The **auction and secondary rail** values are indicators of rail service quality and demand/supply.

Figure 4

Secondary rail car market, delivery month-year



*up to 6 months of trading

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Average bid/offer is the simple average of all the weekly bids/offers over the entire period (up to 6 months) for guaranteed railcars that are traded for delivery in a particular month.

Range for bid/offer shows the range of average weekly bids/offers over the entire period (up to 6 months) for guaranteed railcars that are traded for delivery in a particular month.

Table 6--Weekly secondary rail car market, week ending 3/12/05 ($/car)*

	Delivery period			
	Apr. 05	**May-05**	**Jun-05**	**Jul-05**
BNSF-GF	-$13	-$10	-$6	$13
Change from last week	-$18	-$15	-$26	-$5
UP-Pool	-$28	-$18	$0	$38
Change from last week	-$9	-$18	-$13	-$5

*Average premium/discount to tariff, $/car-last week

Note: Bids listed are market INDICATORS only & are NOT guaranteed prices,
Missing value = no bid quoted; GF = guaranteed freight; Pool = guaranteed pool

Sources: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Data from Atwood/ConAgra, Harvest States Co-op, James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.

Table 7--Tariff rail rates for unit and shuttle train shipments*

Effective date: 3/7/2005	Origin region	Destination region	Rate/car	Rate/metric ton	Rate/bushel**
Unit train*					
Wheat	Minneapolis, MN	Houston, TX	$2,420	$26.68	$0.73
	Kansas City, MO	Galveston, TX	$1,920	$21.16	$0.58
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$4,148	$45.72	$1.24
	St. Louis, MO	Houston, TX	$2,145	$23.64	$0.64
	Chicago, IL	Albany, NY	$1,861	$20.51	$0.56
	Chicago, IL	Richmond, VA	$2,002	$22.07	$0.60
Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$3,600	$39.68	$1.01
	Chicago, IL	Baton Rouge, LA	$2,510	$27.67	$0.70
	Council Bluffs, IA	Baton Rouge, LA	$2,370	$26.12	$0.66
	Evansville, IN	Raleigh, NC	$1,791	$19.74	$0.50
	Council,Bluffs, IA	Stockton, CA	$3,606	$39.75	$1.01
	Kansas City, MO	Dalhart, TX	$1,965	$21.66	$0.55
	Columbus, OH	Raleigh, NC	$1,700	$18.74	$0.48
Soybeans	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$3,610	$39.79	$1.08
	Chicago, IL	Baton Rouge, LA	$2,355	$25.96	$0.71
	Council Bluffs, IA	Baton Rouge, LA	$2,215	$24.42	$0.66
	Evansville, IN	Raleigh, NC	$1,791	$19.74	$0.54
	Chicago, IL	Raleigh, NC	$2,391	$26.36	$0.72
Shuttle Train					
Wheat	St. Louis, MO	Houston, TX	$1,895	$20.89	$0.57
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$3,993	$44.01	$1.20
Corn	Fremont, NE	Houston, TX	$2,665	$29.38	$0.75
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$3,450	$38.03	$0.97
Soybeans	Council Bluffs, IA	Houston, TX	$2,785	$30.70	$0.84
	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$3,410	$37.59	$1.02

*A unit train refers to shipments of at least 52 cars. Shuttle train rates are available for qualified shipments of more than 100 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements.

**Approximate load per car = 100 short tons: corn 56 lbs./bu., wheat & soybeans 60 lbs./bu.

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.cpr.ca, www.csx.com, www.uprr.com

Table 8--Tariff rail rates for U.S. bulk grain shipments to Mexico

Effective date: 3/7/2005	Origin state	Border crossing region	Train size	Rate/car [1]	Rate/metric ton	Rate/bushel**
Wheat	KS	Brownsville, TX	Shuttle	$2,742	$28.02	$0.76
	ND	Eagle Pass, TX	Shuttle	$5,426	$55.44	$1.51
	OK	El Paso, TX	Shuttle	$2,155	$22.02	$0.60
	OK	El Paso, TX	Shuttle	$2,241	$22.90	$0.62
	AR	Laredo, TX	Unit	$2,165	$22.12	$0.60
	IL	Laredo, TX	Shuttle	$2,970	$30.35	$0.83
	MT	Laredo, TX	Shuttle	$5,714*	$58.38	$1.59
	TX	Laredo, TX	Shuttle	$1,598*	$16.33	$0.44
	MO	Laredo, TX	Unit	$2,678*	$27.36	$0.74
	WI	Laredo, TX	Unit	$3,188	$32.57	$0.89
Corn	NE	Brownsville, TX	Shuttle	$2,995	$30.60	$0.78
	NE	Brownsville, TX	Shuttle	$3,429*	$35.04	$0.89
	IA	Eagle Pass, TX	Unit	$3,225	$32.95	$0.84
	MO	Eagle Pass, TX	Shuttle	$2,932*	$29.96	$0.76
	NE	Eagle Pass, TX	Shuttle	$3,332*	$34.05	$0.86
	IA	Laredo, TX	Unit	$3,225*	$32.95	$0.84
Soybean	IA	Brownsville, TX	Shuttle	$2,880	$29.43	$0.80
	MN	Brownsville, TX	Shuttle	$3,176	$32.45	$0.88
	NE	Brownsville, TX	Shuttle	$2,688	$27.47	$0.75
	NE	Eagle Pass, TX	Shuttle	$2,765	$28.25	$0.77
	IA	Laredo, TX	Unit	$2,918*	$29.82	$0.81

A unit train refers to shipments of at least 52 cars. Shuttle train are available for qualified shipments of more than 100 cars that meet railroad efficiency requirements.

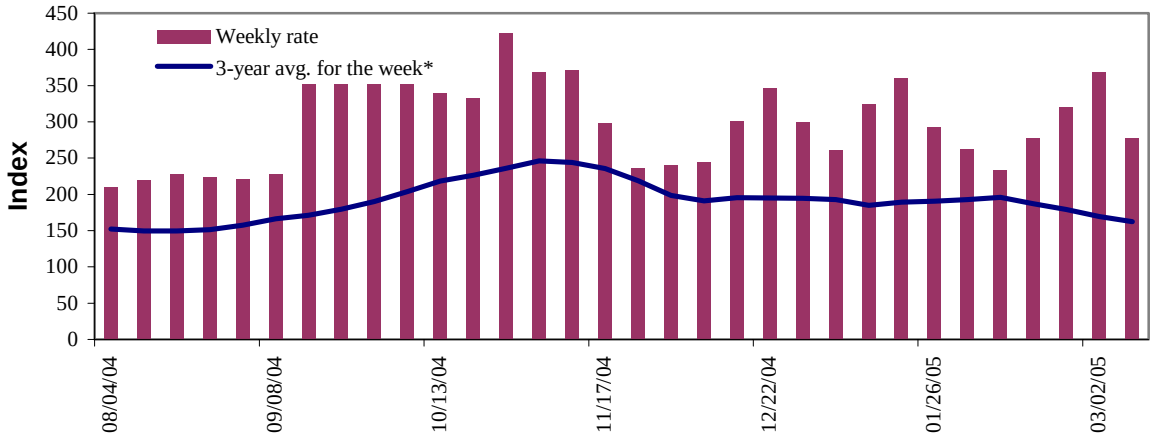
[1]Rates are based upon published tariff rates for high-capacity rail cars.

*High-capacity rate not available, rate estimated using published low-capacity tariff rate x 1.08

**Approximate load per car = 97.87 metric tons: Corn 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

Sources: www.bnsf.com, www.uprr.com

Figure 5
Illinois River barge rate index - quotes



Note: Index = percent of tariff rate; *4-week moving average
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

The **Illinois River barge rate index** averaged 183 percent of the **benchmark tariff rates** between 1999 and 2001, based on weekly market quotes. The **index**, along with **rate quotes** and **futures market** bids are indicators of grain transport supply and demand.

Table 9--Barge rate quotes: southbound barge freight

Location	3/9/2005	3/2/2005	Apr '05	June '05
Twin Cities	n/a	n/a	294	284
Mid-Mississippi	304	380	265	268
Illinois River	278	369	255	256
St. Louis	247	323	226	228
Lower Ohio	272	323	242	241
Cairo-Memphis	237	298	216	212

Index = percent of tariff, based on 1976 tariff benchmark rate
Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Calculating barge rate per ton:
(Index * 1976 tariff benchmark rate per ton)/100

Select applicable index from market quotes included in tables on this page. The 1976 benchmark rates per ton are provided in map (see figure 6).

Note: The Illinois barge rate is for Beardstown, IL, La Grange Lock & Dam (L&D 8).

Figure 6
Benchmark tariff rates

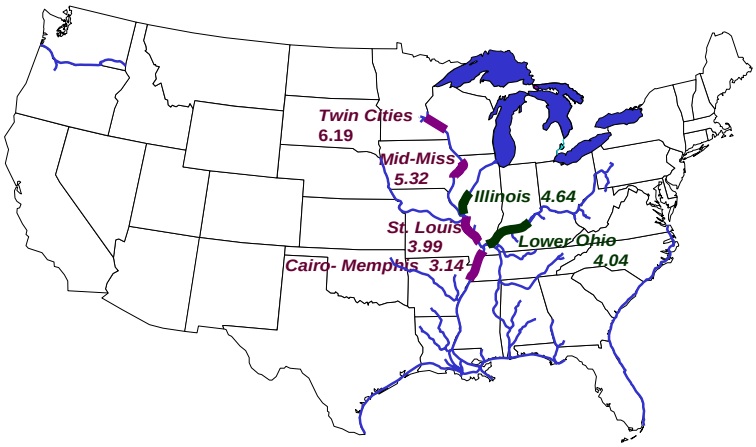
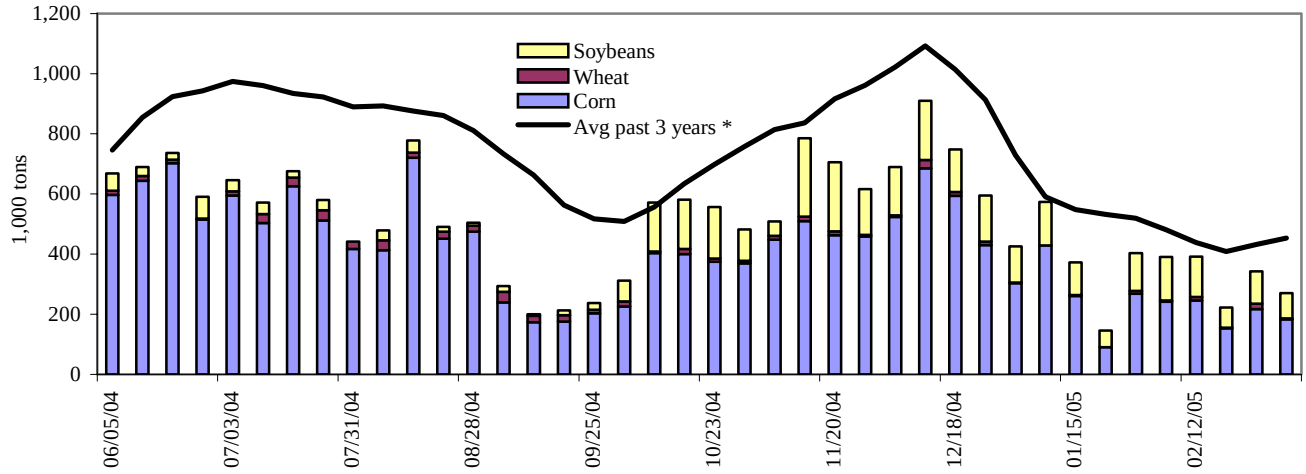


Figure 7

Barge movements on the Mississippi River (Locks 27 - Granite City, IL)



* 4-week moving average

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Table 10--Barge grain movements (1,000 tons)

Week ending 3/5/2005	Corn	Wheat	Soybean	Other	Total
Mississippi River					
Rock Island, IL (L15)	0	0	0	0	0
Winfield, MO (L25)	12	0	14	0	26
Alton, IL (L26)	182	3	82	6	274
Granite City, IL (L27)	183	3	84	6	277
Illinois River (L8)	155	0	61	8	223
Ohio River (L52)	97	3	48	14	162
Arkansas River (L1)	0	25	23	0	48
2005 YTD	3,057	254	1,732	156	5,199
2004 YTD	3,847	419	1,285	224	5,774
2005 as % of 2004 YTD	79	61	135	70	90
Total 2004	26,235	2,701	6,784	843	36,563

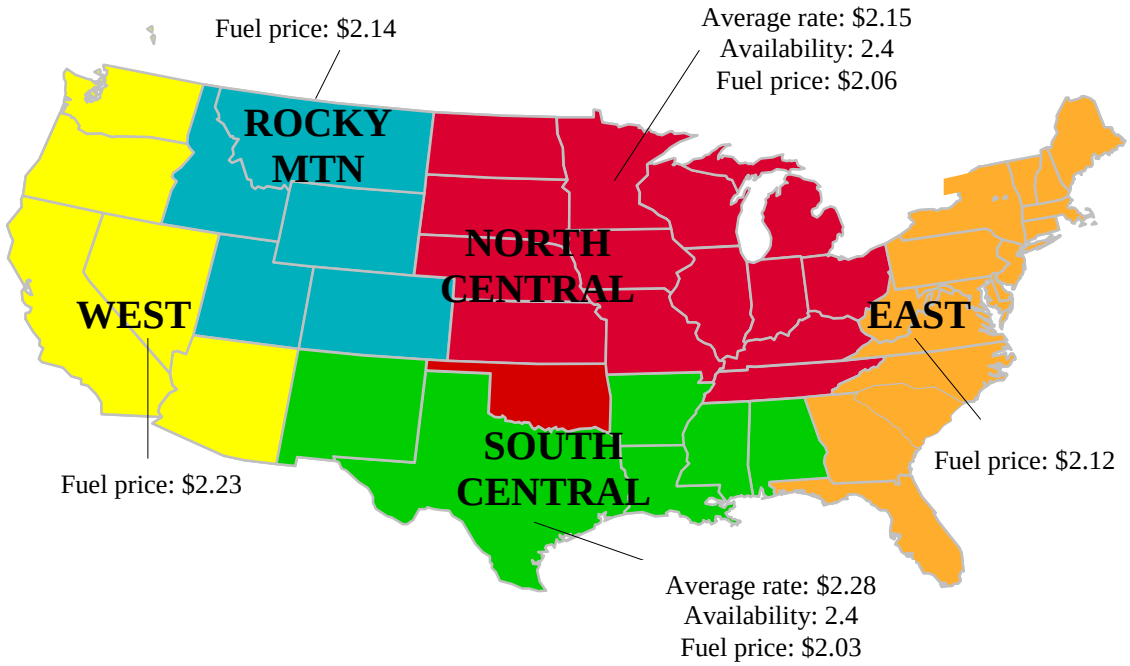
YTD (year-to-date) and calendar year total includes Miss/27, Ohio/52, and Ark/1. "Other" refers to oats, barley, sorghum, and rye.

Source: U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (www.mvr.usace.army.mil/mvrimi/omni/webrpts/default.asp)

Note: Total may not add exactly, due to rounding

Truck Transportation

Figure 8
U.S. grain truck market advisory, 4th quarter 2004*



*Average rate per loaded mile, based on truck rates for trips of 25, 100, and 200 miles
Note: Fuel prices are a quarterly average (unit per gallon)
Fuel price data source: Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy, www.eia.doe.gov

Table 11--U.S. grain truck market overview, 4th quarter 2004

Region/commodity*	25 miles	100 miles	200 miles	Truck availability	Truck activity	Future truck activity
	Rate per mile			*Rating compared to same quarter last year* 1=Very easy to 5=Very difficult	1=Much lower to 5=Much higher	
National average[1]	**2.89**	**1.94**	**1.75**	**2.5**	**3.2**	**2.9**
North Central region[2]	2.75	1.97	1.74	2.4	3.5	3.0
Corn	3.03	1.95	1.88	2.1	3.6	3.0
Wheat	2.27	2.05	1.67	2.6	3.0	2.8
Soybean	2.94	1.88	1.97	1.9	3.4	2.8
South Central region[2]	3.03	1.95	1.86	2.4	2.6	2.3
Corn	3.06	1.97	1.82	2.3	2.5	2.3
Wheat	2.75	1.85	1.78	2.3	3.0	2.5
Soybean	3.39	2.21	2.11	1.5	2.3	2.3

Rates are based on trucks with 80,000 lb weight limit
*Commodity averages based on truck rates for top producing states based on National Agricultural Statistics Service/USDA
[1]National average includes: AR, CO, IA, IL, IN, KS, LA, MN, MS, ND, NE, OH, OK, OR, SD, TX, and WA.
[2]Commodity rates per mile include the average of the top 3 producing states within the region.
Source: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

The **weekly diesel price** provides a proxy for trends in U.S. truck rates. Diesel fuel is a significant expense for truck grain movements, accounting for 37 percent of the estimated variable cost.

Table 12--Retail on-highway diesel prices*, week ending 03/14/05 (US$/gallon)

			Change from	
Region	**Location**	**Price**	**Week ago**	**Year ago**
I	East Coast	2.197	0.034	0.573
	New England	2.320	0.032	0.564
	Central Atlantic	2.309	0.029	0.578
	Lower Atlantic	2.137	0.035	0.571
II	Midwest	2.140	0.027	0.558
III	Gulf Coast	2.130	0.030	0.573
IV	Rocky Mountain	2.260	0.031	0.624
V	West Coast	2.442	-0.008	0.641
	California	2.418	0.010	0.544
Total	U.S.	2.194	0.026	0.577

*Diesel fuel prices include all taxes.

Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy (www.eia.doe.gov)

Grain Exports

Table 13--U.S. export balances (1,000 metric tons)

	Wheat						Corn	Soybeans	Total
Week ending 1/	HRW	SRW	HRS	SWW	DUR	All wheat			
3/3/2005	1,556	271	1,400	517	107	3,851	6,746	3,662	14,259
This week year ago	2,234	911	1,422	1,002	146	5,715	8,330	2,820	16,865
Cumulative exports-crop year 2/									
2004/05 YTD	7,347	2,869	6,085	3,975	481	20,758	23,502	22,120	66,380
2003/04 YTD	9,720	2,876	5,016	3,782	823	22,216	25,060	20,196	67,472
2004/05 as % of 2003/04	76	100	121	105	58	93	94	110	98
2003/04 Total	12,697	3,785	6,928	4,889	1,053	29,353	47,704	24,102	101,159
2002/03 Total	6,896	2,899	6,645	3,517	720	20,677	39,646	28,908	89,231

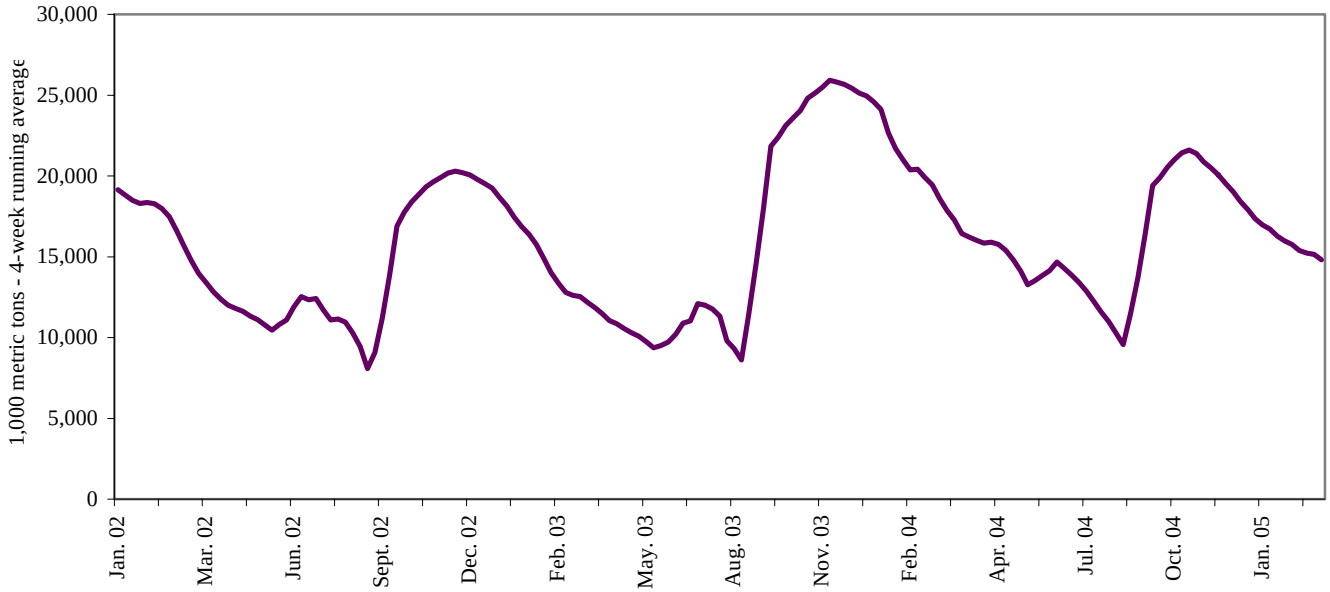
Note: YTD = year-to-date. Crop year: wheat = 6/01-5/31, corn & soybeans = 9/01-8/31, 1/ = Current outstanding unshipped export sales to date

2/ = New crop year in effect for corn and soybean sales

Source: Foreign Agricultural Service/USDA (www.fas.usda.gov)

Figure 9

U.S. grain, unshipped export balance, including wheat, corn, and soybean sales



Source: Foreign Agricultural Service/USDA (www.fas.usda.gov)

Table 14--Select U.S. port regions - grain inspections for export (1,000 metric tons)

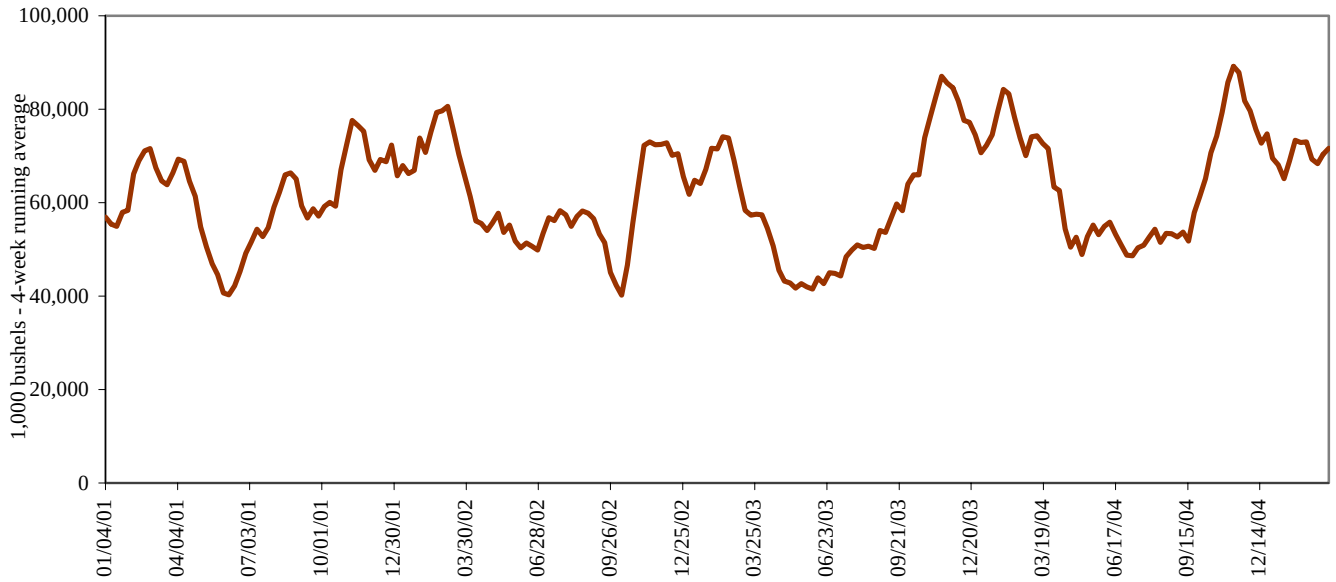
	Pacific Region			Mississippi Gulf			Texas Gulf			Port Region total		
Week ending	Wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Wheat	Corn	Soybeans	Pacific	Mississippi	Texas
03/10/05	122	171	291	98	515	549	148	11	0	585	1,162	159
2005 YTD	2,155	1,619	1,847	1,032	5,356	5,368	1,102	187	6	5,621	11,755	1,295
2004 YTD	2,290	1,700	1,362	1,416	7,045	4,223	2,197	44	0	5,353	12,684	2,241
2005 as % of 2004	94	95	136	73	76	127	50	429	0	105	93	58
2004 Total *	12,121	9,741	4,753	7,154	32,851	15,540	7,936	131	23	26,615	55,546	8,089

Source: Federal Grain Inspection Service/USDA (www.usda.gov/gipsa); YTD: year-to-date; * includes 53rd week

The United States exports approximately one-quarter of the grain it produces. On average, it includes nearly 45 percent of U.S.-grown wheat, 35 percent of U.S.-grown soybeans, and 20 percent of the U.S.-grown corn. Over 60 percent of these U.S. export grain shipments departed through the Mississippi Gulf region in 2003.

Figure 10

U.S. grain inspected for export (wheat, corn, and soybeans)



Source: Federal Grain Inspection Service/USDA (www.usda.gov/gipsa)

Ocean Transportation

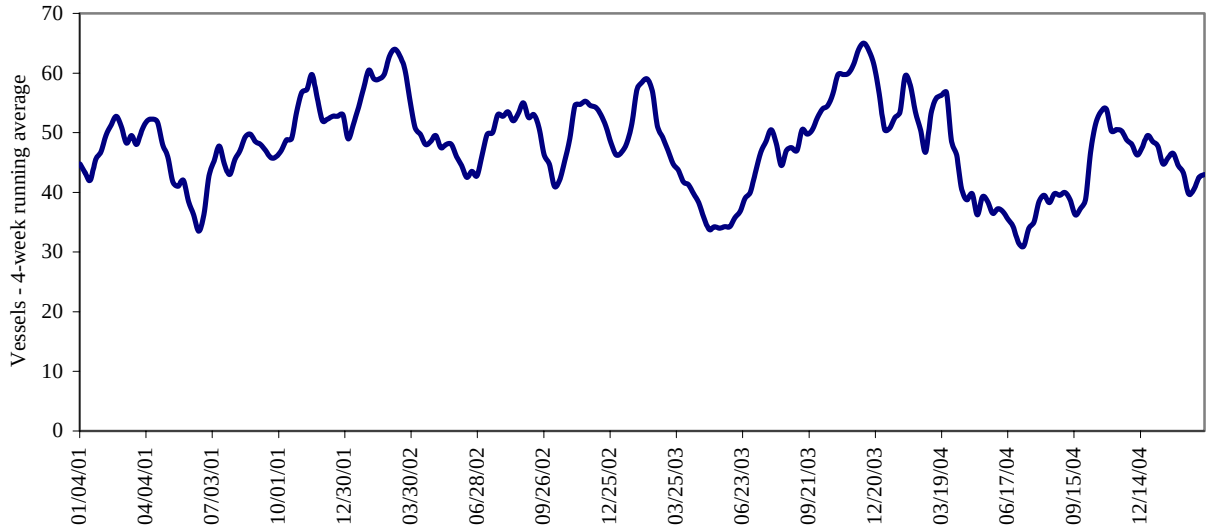
Table 15--Weekly port region grain ocean vessel activity (number of vessels)

	Gulf			Pacific Northwest	Vancouver B.C.
Date	In port	Loaded 7-days	Due next 10-days	In port	In port
3/10/2005	29	39	53	6	6
3/3/2005	31	41	61	7	5
2004 range	(10..43)	(25..73)	(38..96)	(4..16)	(0..18)
2004 avg.	24	45	61	9	6

Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Figure 11

Gulf Port grain vessel loading (past 7 days)



Source: Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

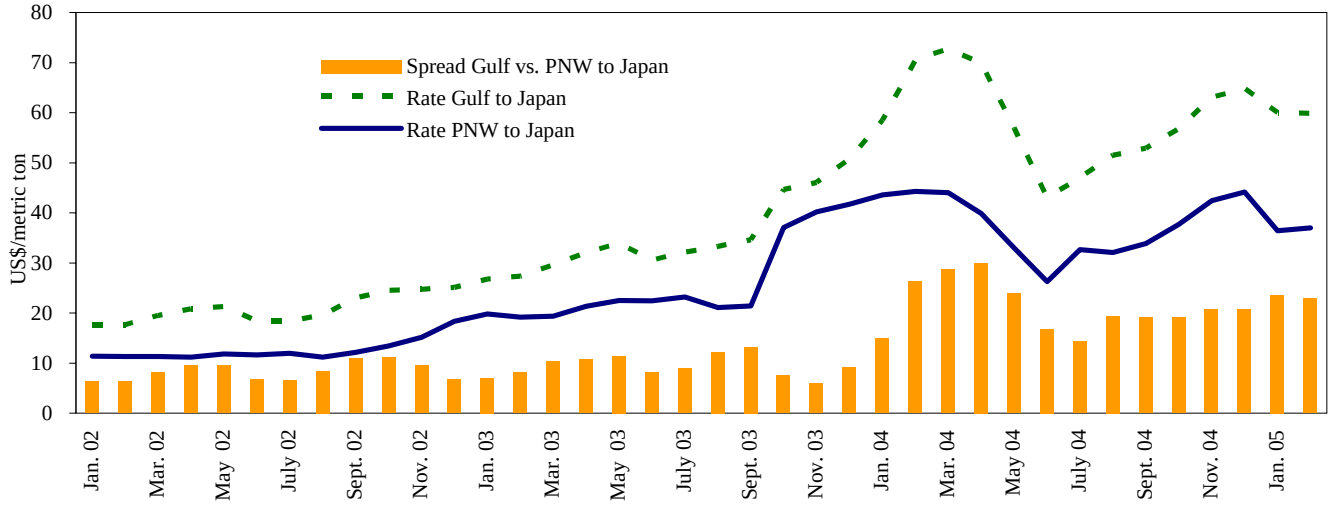
Table 16--Quarterly ocean freight rates (average rates & percentage changes) (US$/metric ton)

Countries/ regions	2004 4th qtr	2003 4th qtr	Percent change	Countries/ regions	2004 4th qtr	2003 4th qtr	Percent change
Gulf to				**Pacific NW to**			
Japan	$60.83	$41.83	45	Japan	---	---	---
China	$56.35	$45.50	24				
N. Europe	---	---	---	**Argentina/Brazil to**			
N. Africa	---	$35.00	---	Med. Sea	---	$38.50	---
Med. Sea	---	$31.75	---	China	---	---	---

Source: Maritime Research, Inc. (www.maritime-research.com)

Figure 12

Grain vessel rates, U.S. to Japan



Source: Baltic Exchange (www.balticexchange.com)

Table 17--Ocean freight rates for selected shipments, week ending 03/12/05

Export region	Import region	Grain	Month	Volume loads (metric tons)	Freight rate ($/metric ton)
U.S. Gulf	Japan	Hvy Grain	Mar 1/2	54,000	59.75
U.S. Gulf	Mauritiania	Wheat	Mar 7/17	8,750	69.75
U.S. Gulf	Haiti*	Wheat	Feb 19/28	8,300	59.18
U.S. Gulf	Kenya	Wheat	Mar 1/10	5,000	78.50
PNW	Kenya	Wheatflour	Mar 5/15	34,000	74.00
River Plate	Algeria	Hvy Grain	Mar 5/10	25,000	59.00
River Plate	Algeria	Wheat	Feb 5/15	25,000	59.50

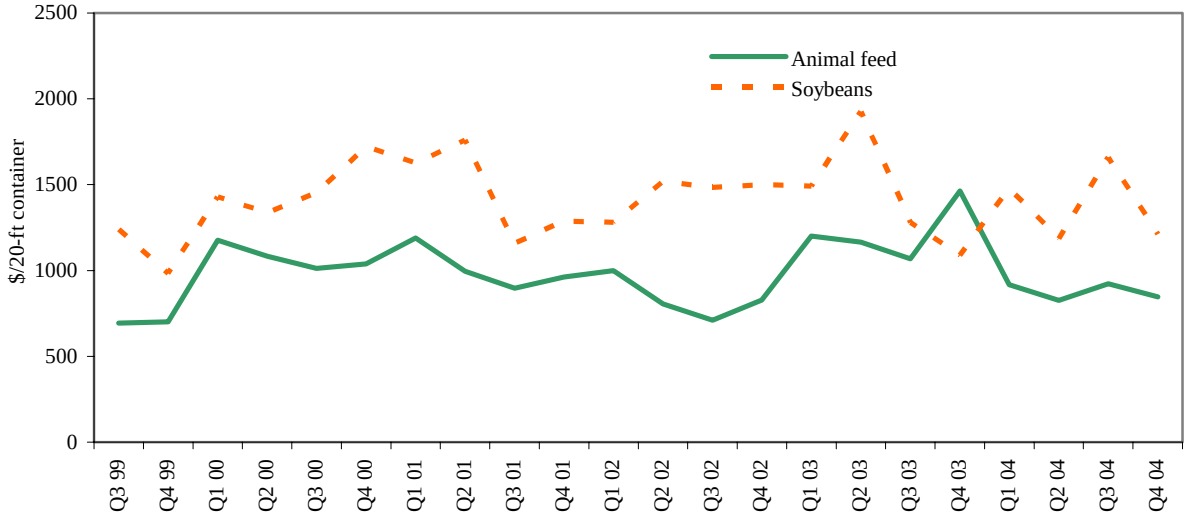
Rates shown are for metric ton (2,204.62 lbs. = 1 metric ton), F.O.B., except where otherwise indicates; op = option

*Most food aid from the United States is required to be shipped on U.S. flag vessels. The vessels are limited in availability resulting in higher rates. In addition, destinations receiving food aid generally lack adequate port unloading facilities, requiring the vessel to remain in port for a longer duration than normal.

Source: Maritime Research Inc. (www.maritime-research.com)

Figure 13

Weighted average rates[1] for containerized shipments of animal feed and soybeans to selected Asian countries



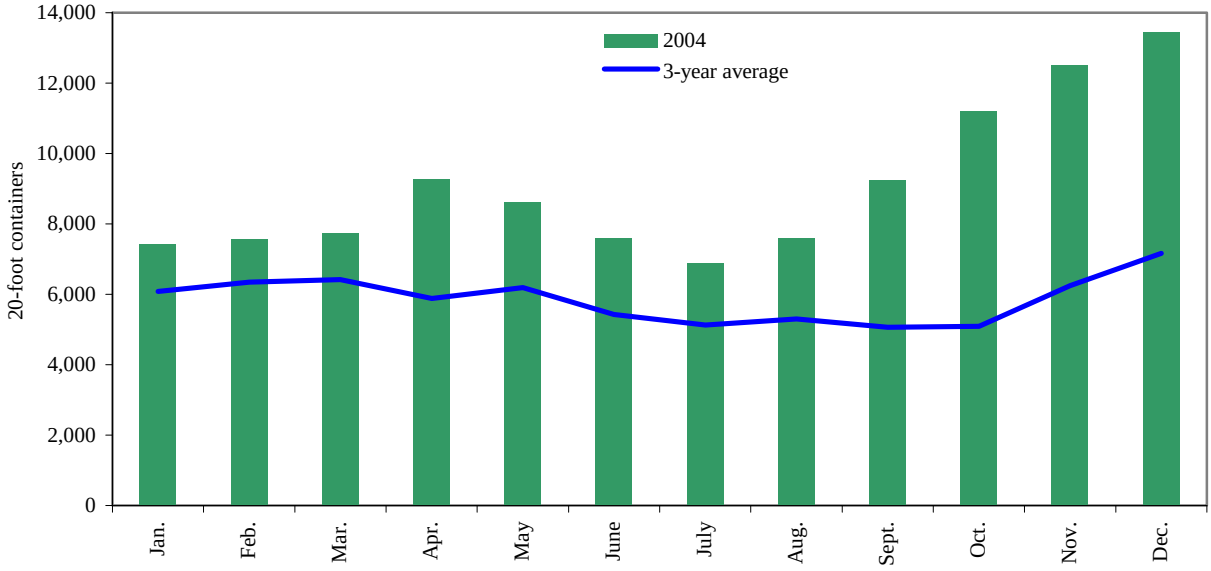
[1]Animal Feed: Busan-Korea (14%), Kaohsiung-Taiwan (24%), Tokyo-Japan (38%), Hong Kong (20%), Bangkok-Thailand (3%) and soybeans: Busan-Korea (4%), Keelung-Taiwan (53%), Tokyo-Japan (44%), Bangkok-Thailand (0.2%) Quarter 4, 2004.

Source: Ocean Rate Bulletin, Transportation & Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

Container ocean freight rates – average rate per twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) weighted by shipping line market share and trade route.

Figure 14

Monthly shipments of containerized grain for 2004 compared with a 3-year average



Note: PIERS data is available with a lag of approximately 40 days

Source: Port Import Export Reporting Service (PIERS), *Journal of Commerce*

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Related Websites

Agricultural Container Indicators	http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd2/agci/
Ocean Rate Bulletin	http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/Ocean/index.asp